

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 2345

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: XF, SY, KU
SUBJ: SYRIA'S ASAD REPORTEDLY REBUFFS KUWAITI PLEA ON ARAB SUMMIT

REF: KUWAIT 2296

1. UPON RETURN FROM BRIEF VISITS TO DAMASCUS AND AMMAN APRIL 17-18, KUWAITI FON MIN SHEIKH SABAH AL-AHMAD REPORTEDLY BRIEFED THE AMIR ON THE DISCOURAGING PROSPECTS FOR SYRIAN ATTENDANCE AT AN ARAB SOLIDARITY SUMMIT. LOCAL PRESS QUOTES "RELIABLE SOURCES" TO THE EFFECT THAT ASAD PERSONALLY TOLD THE FON MIN THAT HE WOULD NOT ATTEND A SUMMIT AT WHICH SADAT WERE PRESENT UNLESS SADAT CONCEDES BEFOREHAND THE FAILURE OF HIS PEACE INITIATIVE. SOURCES SAID THAT NEW EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI TALKS, GIVEN THIS SITUATION, WOULD ONLY MAKE ARAB RECONCILIATION MORE DIFFICULT.

2. IN AMMAN, KING HUSSEIN EXPRESSED APPRECIATION AND SUPPORT FOR THE KUWAITI INITIATIVE, BUT APPARENTLY NOTHING MORE.
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"SOURCES" SUGGESTED TO REPORTERS THAT ANY FRESH MOVE BY ATHERTON TO PROMOTE RESUMPTION OF EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI PEACE TALKS IN THIS ATMOSPHERE WOULD ONLY COMPLICATE POSSIBILITIES TO EFFECT ARAB RECONCILIATION.

3. DEP PRI MIN/MIN INFO SHEIKH JABER AL-ALI TOLD AMBASSADOR

APRIL 18 THAT, SINCE BASIC GOK OBJECTIVE IS ARAB UNITY, KUWAITIS FELT THAT THEY HAD TO KEEP UP EFFORTS TO PROMOTE PAN-ARAB MEETING DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE THIS AIM, ALTHOUGH THEY FULLY REALIZED THERE WAS NO PROSPECT OF SUCCESS AT THIS TIME.

4. COMMENT: GOK FINDS ITSELF "BETWIXT AND BETWEEN" IN THE CURRENT MIDEAST SITUATION; WHILE KUWAITIS WOULD BE HAPPY TO SEE SADAT'S INITIATIVE SUCCEED, THEY ARE CONVINCED IT WILL FAIL. THEREFORE, THEY SEE AS ONLY PROSPECT OF PREVENTING REALLY BITTER SPLIT IN ARAB WORLD, WHICH RUNS COUNTER TO PRIMARY KUWAITI NATIONAL INTEREST, THE PAPERING-OVER OF THE SADAT-ASAD DISPUTE IN A STAGED ARAB GATHERING IN WHICH EACH ONE BACKS OFF FROM HIS POSITION ENOUGH TO PREVENT ANY LOSS OF PRESTIGE TO EITHER. WE BELIEVE THAT, IN FACT, GOK WOULD PREFER THIS OUTCOME EVEN AT THE COST OF A SETBACK TO ARAB-ISRAELI PEACE EFFORTS, WHICH COULD BE RESUMED ANOTHER DAY IN ANOTHER WAY SATISFACTORY TO ALL ARAB FACTIONS.
MAESTRONE

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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